Form 10-300 (Rev. 6-72)

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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The Halsted House is a detached brick residence in a mixed style. The massing with sharply pointed bay windows on the front and the intricate designs in corbelled brick associated with the cornices and chimneys of the side elevations is generically Queen Anne. The strictly formal front elevation, antithetical to that style, derives from Sullivan's French training. The general simplification and clarity of the facade is probably also Sullivan's own contribution as are certain details: the ornamentation of the front and rear dormers, the cornice of the second floor and the window subdivisions and mullions of the first floor.

Queen Anne irregularity is also mostly missing from the plan. There is a central hall with a sitting room on the left (west) and a parlor followed by the dining room on the right (east). A stair hall intersecting on the cross axis provides the only touch of irregularity. At the left rear corner there is a large kitchen originally connected with the dining room through a butler's pantry.

The second floor has two bedrooms on the front separated by a chamber and two bedrooms at the rear separated by a bath. The same corner bedrooms are separated on the east by another chamber and on the west by the main stairs and behind it toward the rear, a servant's staircase.

The foundation walls are rubble to grade and brick above. outside walls are solid brick. In addition two brick cross walls run longitudinally thru the house from front to rear on either side of the central hall. These are interrupted, of course, for doors and the staircase. The walls are carried up to a cornice at the front and rear and, on the sides, to a richly decorated system of corbelled brick surmounted by a diminutive rounded pediment connected in turn by arcades to two massive chimneys on either side. The roof was slate, now covered with tar paper.

Inside the ornamental and functional details are especially interesting. In the sitting room on the left (west) there is a Queen Anne fireplace framed up in wood with a mirror above and what appear to be Lowe tiles below. In the parlor on the right is a fireplace of nearly identical shape but decorated with carved-wood details in Sullivan's ornamental style of 1881-83. The stair railings, generically Queen Anne, are designed with a certain bulbous mannerism that identifies them as Sullivan's work even though none of his typical ornament is associated with them. The wood in the hall is oak; in the parlor it is cherry. The moldings in the hall, parlor and sitting room, including the shutters of the front windows, have typical period profiles and give no evidence of being designed by Sullivan. The two carefully selected stained glass windows on either side of the inner entrance door are of very high quality but do not contain any of Sullivan's more original ornamental details. The superb stained-glass window at the head of the stairs, in rich colors and abstract floral patterns, while probably selected by Sullivan, does not seem to have been designed by him either. In the dining room there is an elegant fireplace of imported marble

Form 10-300a (July 1969)

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STATE	
Illinois	
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FOR NPS USE ON	LY
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Continuation Sheet)

Description - continued

with details of the 1860's or 1870's presumably installed at the time of construction and selected from the catalogue of a company specializing in fireplaces. The upstairs fireplaces are ordinary marble types of 1870's vintage, also presumably acquired as stock items.

HISTORY

The residence was designed in the spring of 1883 by architect Louis Sullivan, who, at that time, was in a 1/3 - 2/3 partnership with architect Dankmar Adler. The drawings, which survive as blueprints, are accordingly labeled "D. Adler & Co.". References to the commission appeared in the American and Inland Architect's in the spring and summer of 1883. Its original address was 490 Belden and the cost, according to the American Architect was \$15,000. The house was occupied by Ann Halsted when in May, 1884, information for the bakeside City Directory of that year was being compiled.

ERIOD (Check One of More as	Appropriate)		
□ Pre-Columbian	16th Century	_} 18th Century	20th Century
15th Century	☐ 17th Century	19th Century	
PECIFIC DATE(5) (If Applicab	le and Known) 188	3-1884	
REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Ch	eck One or More as Appropri	ate)	
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Agriculture	☐ Invention	Science	
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As the earliest remaining detached residence by Dankmar Adler and Louis Sullivan, the house is of the greatest significance. In this building, which survives without any important alterations, is recorded the transition from period styles to Sullivan's early modern aesthetic. There is no other building standing today that can so effectively demonstrate the transition to modern architecture in America. The building demonstrates that Sullivan's architecture evolved out of contemporaneous historic styles. Its formal planning derives from Sullivan's academic training while its massing and details refer to the then current Queen Anne style. Only in limited areas do we recognize Sullivan's early modern design. The dormers at front and rear and the rounded pediments on the sides contain his specially conceived ornament, and even there, the differences between it and contemporaneous work is not especially marked. The stair railings also surely by him, can hardly be distinguished from Queen Anne work of the period. Only in the fireplace of the parlor do we find Sullivan's personal ornament and even there, it is integrated into a fireplace design that is otherwise Queen Anne, as the entirely Queen Anne fireplace in the sitting room, of nearly identical design, except for its ornament, so effectively demonstrates.

From this singularly important residence, Adler and Sullivan would go on during the rest of the 1890's to create in gradual steps a new, non-historical and thus "modern" architectural and ornamental style.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

ILLINOIS HISTORIC SITES SURVEY INVENTORY

1.	Name of Site:				
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	Historic Halsted House				
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8.	Specific Date: 1883	
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Bibliography

Robertson, Robert, Of Whales and Men. New York, Alfred K. Knopf, Inc., 1954.

National Register material

